

The Oxford Falcon.

S. H. THOMPSON, Editor.

OXFORD, MISSISSIPPI.

THURSDAY, NOV. 23, 1865.

SALUTATORY.

Without adopting the usual course of newspaper proprietors, of sending out a fore-runner in the shape of a Prospectus, to solicit subscribers, and to ascertain if we can procure a sufficient number of patrons to warrant us in publishing a paper here; we, to-day, issue and send forth to the people of Oxford and Lafayette County, a specimen number of our paper, though not a specimen of what we expect it to be before long, but the best we can do now. The only guarantee that we can give of our fitness for so responsible a position as conducting a newspaper, is that, for a few years previous to the breaking out of the late civil war, we were publishing a paper in a neighboring County in this State, and we had quite a long list of subscribers in this county, and from the wide circulation our paper had attained, and still increasing, we felt that we had met with quite a success. But the war came, and we closed our office and entered the army as a soldier, and passed through the various ups and downs and vicissitudes of a soldier during the war. And when the war closed it left us so completely bankrupt, that had it not been for a certain article in the terms of surrender, that allowed a soldier transportation home, we doubt if we would have been able to have worked our way home much before this time. We came home and found our once nice little printing office demolished—our type in a confused pile, much of them were gone, and other valuable materials destroyed. We gathered up all the fragments of our printing materials that we could find, and moved them to Oxford. We came here, because here lingers the fond recollections of our boyhood days; here where we learned the art preservative of all arts, and here where we once played prinner-boy, news-boy, and type. We thus, by dint of long and tedious labor, (that none but printers can fully appreciate,) straightened out our office, and so forth our little sheet, hoping that it will meet with sufficient favor and patronage from the people, to enable us to add greatly to our stock of materials and enlarge our paper.

As newspapers are generally supposed to be exponents of the creed of some political party, it may be desired by some to know what has formerly been our political predilections, and what is now our views upon matters of State. From early youth, we have been a zealous (faithful and honest we thought,) supporter of the political doctrines of the National Democratic party, believing it to be for the best interests of the Country. We see no cause for political divisions in the South now. Whatever may have been our opinions, or that of the people of the South in regard to President Johnson, heretofore, we believe all, now should give his Administration a hearty support, especially so long as he continues the policy he seems to have adopted. At some future time there may be, and doubtless will be, political divisions in the South. In all countries where elections are held, Statesmen will honestly differ in regard to State and National policy, hence the same differences take place among the people. When that time comes, if we are living, we will be very apt to be on one side or the other—we are no non-committal. We have learned to form decided opinions on the great questions of the day, whether our opinions be right or wrong; but we shall "be sure we are right, and then go ahead."

We have no political animosity or revenge to satisfy upon any political party or Statesmen in the South, for having been the cause of the late struggle; the Abolition party of the North, was the cause of the war; or in other words, if there had been no Abolition party, or if the Abolition party had been willing to stand to and abide by the Constitution of the United States, there would have been no war; the world now knows this fact. Then, let us all go to work with zeal, and put forth the energy and enterprise that our people have heretofore manifested, and by honest industry and charity to all mankind, we will again build up our great fortunes and country, and the God who rules the destinies of all nations and kingdoms, will bless us.

THE NEWS.

We have no news of importance—in the way of general news, as we have seen but few late papers, as we have been here for some time. But hereafter we expect to be able to give the General News of the Country telegraphically, and so on.

THE BURNING OF OXFORD MISSISSIPPI.

It has been the common remark of all travelers, who come to our town, since it was burned to ashes by the so-called Gen. A. J. Smith, that "Oxford, is the most completely demolished town they have seen anywhere." We presume this is true, and if there was any reason for destroying any of the many towns that were destroyed in the South during the war, we presume there was less reason or cause for destroying Oxford than any other. It is true, that Oxford, and Lafayette County, had sent to the fight as many, and perhaps more soldiers, according to the population, than most other counties, and a more gallant and brave band of soldiers, never marched upon a battle-field than they were. But this certainly cannot furnish any cause why our once beautiful town should be doomed to ashes; when it was then inhabited only by a few old men, and helpless women and children, quietly laboring to obtain what scanty subsistence our prostrate country afforded. There was no Confederate army stationed at Oxford, nor had there been any, except Cavalry, passing, and no government stores here, no army here to resist the approach of the aforesaid General and his army; when he came here on the 22d day of Aug. 1864, and ordered his soldiers to burn up the town; when the house of nearly every private family in the town and near it, was robbed and plundered by the soldiers of this so-called General. And we suppose the robbing and plundering was also, ordered by him. A number of private houses were burned, and a number were set on fire, but afterwards the fire was extinguished without doing much damage. We suppose the so-called General also ordered the robbing and plundering, because some of our old citizens who witnessed the scene, tell us that there were quite a number of the soldiers that seemed to be opposed to burning and robbing and actually busied themselves, trying to prevail upon the soldiers engaged in it, not to do so; but they were replied to by the other soldiers, saying the General ordered it and they were going to do it. They robbed the private families of all articles they could find in their houses, that a soldier could find use for, and many articles that most persons would be curious to know what use they could have for them. They stripped the houses of all manner of clothing they could find, both men, women, and children's clothing, bed covers, sheets, pillowslaps, carpets, table-ware, books, private papers, all money of any kind, and some articles of furniture, and all provisions they could find, and drove off or killed all live stock except dogs. They did not even spare the poor negro, for whom they profess so much love; they robbed the negro too, of all articles of value they could find among them, such as money, good clothes, watches, brass jewelry, etc.

We are told that some of our old citizens conversed with the said General after the burning had commenced, and begged him not to burn any more of the town than was then on fire, and very earnestly urged that he would spare certain buildings, such as the large brick hotel owned by Mrs. Butler, a widow lady, and her children, and the large Masonic Hall building, which was unoccupied except the third story, by the Masonic Order. But the said General replied very sneeringly and insultingly, and went on with the burning; and all the business houses, around the public square, have one which miraculously escaped burning, including the Court House in the centre of the square, the Masonic Lodge Building and Mrs. Butler's large hotel building, with its numerous rooms, then all furnished, and Mrs. Butler and family then living in the hotel, and keeping the house as she had done for more than twenty years; she was not permitted to move anything out of her house, but her clothing, one bed, and some little furniture out of her private room; all was consumed.

It is said that the said General was in a great glee, while the destruction was going on, that he was considerably inebriated and drunk freely and frequently of spirits while the burning was going on. It seems however that the said General was not so much intoxicated as to forget number one, while the grand game was going on. It is said that he went down in person, to the first residence of the Hon. Jacob Thompson, where he found Mrs. Thompson and family, (except her husband,) and ordered them out of the house immediately, not permitting them to take anything out, but her clothing, one bed, and some articles of furniture out of her private room; then the said General went into the spacious furnished rooms, and helped himself to such valuables as suited him; such as silver-ware, costly articles of furniture, etc.

and had them carried out and loaded a wagon which he had ordered for the purpose. After which he ordered the house to be set on fire, and stood by and witnessed the burning.

The amount of property destroyed in Oxford and carried off that day, and all done in a few hours, will not fall far short in value, of \$1000,000, all belonged to individuals; no government property here. That certainly ought to make a memorable record for a General, and wreath his brow with never-fading laurels. The only reason, we can think of, and which we think is the most plausible, why the said General committed this great destruction upon Oxford, was to revenge upon Gen. Forrest, and perhaps gratify a portion of his army, that were inclined to plunder. It seems that Gen. Forrest with his little army of about 4000 cavalry, had been holding in check for two weeks at the Tallahatche river, twelve miles north of here, the said Gen. Smith with his army of 15 or 16000, infantry and cavalry. And Forrest, concluded that he had not quite sufficient force to charge upon the said General and drive him back, he therefore used a little strategy. Forrest took one-half of his little army and ran around the said General and his army in the direction of Memphis, leaving orders with the other half to fall back and let the said General come, and so he did come on, cautiously and quietly, and not being disturbed, only occasionally when a few Rebels would show themselves ahead of him. And the said General made the trip here twelve miles, in two days and one night, after Forrest had ordered his 2000 cavalry to fall back and let him come. After the said General arrived here, he evidently felt that he had gained a great victory over Forrest and he wanted everybody here to tell him just about how far Forrest was ahead—said he would soon have him. And he seemed kindly disposed towards the inhabitants here. He appointed a Provost Marshal, and ordered guards to be sent to protect all the private houses. But after he had been here about one hour, and still feeling ahead for Forrest, a courier came up in his rear, in hot haste, and handed him a dispatch which informed him that Forrest had arrived in Memphis the morning before, and was playing the very wild with them. The said General immediately ordered in all the guards, and sent a dispatch ordering back the courier he had sent ahead to hunt Forrest, and the destruction commenced; and the scene that followed beggars description. After the town was in flames, the soldiers dispersed, all over town into all the private houses, some ran into the churches, and tolled the bells, others yelling like Indians, rushed into private houses, throwing every thing in confusion in the house, plundering and seizing everything of value, that they could convey off; women and children screaming for help. This scene continued until about 4 P. M. when the army withdrew in the direction of Memphis, the said General and his staff, being the last to leave, remaining on the public square until the last building was enveloped in flames.

THE FALCON.

What's in a name? It is said that a rose, will smell as sweet by any other name; and we think our paper will be just as interesting when called "The Oxford Falcon," as it would be, were it called by any other name. We hope no body will object to our name, as we have a fancy for birds, and often look with wonder and astonishment at their mysterious pranks while they are gliding through the air. The Falcon, is a species of the Hawk, a bird of prey and we believe is a native of South America. He is often trained by sportsmen in his native country, and so trained, that they can send him out, and he captures other species of the feathered tribe that they may wish him to capture. He is a good bird.

THE STAY LAW.

We learn from a gentleman just arrived, who attended a term of the Circuit Court held in Yalobush County Miss. (the term just closed,) when a suit was tried involving the constitutionality of the Stay-law passed by our Legislature, early in the commencement of the war. The case was argued by Messrs. Waldman and Lamar against the constitutionality of the law, and his honor Judge Cochran decided the law unconstitutional.

To the Business Men of Memphis. We call the especial attention of the business men in Memphis to the fact, that it would be greatly to their interests to advertise in our paper. It will circulate throughout the county, and in Pontotoc, Calhoun and Chickasaw, there being no paper published in these three last mentioned counties now. We want on a small scale, it is true, but we expect to have our long

MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE.

This body has been in session every since the 16th of October ult, and we are not able at this present writing to give very much of interest of their proceedings. But from all we can learn they have been rather a working body. They have had a great and vexed questions before them for their action, and in a few days they will have past an important law in regard to all freedmen in this state. Also on the currency stay-law, Road law, an act for the benefit of disabled soldiers, and their families. And they have already past an act levying a tax of \$2 per bale on all cotton that has been sold since the 1st of Oct. last, and is to be sold, \$50 on each mercantile or business house, including Drugstores, \$30 on each saw mill, that saws lumber for sale, \$100 on distilleries of grain or fruit, \$100 on all transient vendors of merchandise, and the bill takes various other articles, which tax is to be collected by the sheriff by the 1st day of January 1866. They have before them other important laws and have passed various others and we learn they will adjourn, or rather take a recess about the last of this week, to meet again on the first of February next.

BY THE GOVERNOR.

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI.
Adj't and Insp. GEN'L OFFICE,
JACKSON, Miss., Nov. 24, 1865.

No. 1.
Officers commanding volunteer companies, already, or that may be organized and commissioned, are warned that it is their duty to aid the civil authorities in the suppression of crime and the prevention of lawlessness of all kinds. They are not authorized to take the law into their own hands and be judge and jury—such conduct would rather add to, than decrease the evils that surround us. Any one found committing depredations or endangering the peace and safety of the community in any way, should be arrested and turned over to the proper authorities for trial.

While the organization has for its object the protection of the persons and property of the citizens of the State, it should be borne in mind that any oppression of any class of the population of the State is not only contrary to law and will bring sure and speedy punishment upon the offenders, but is also contrary to good policy. It is recommended that each company make rules and regulations for their government on patrol duties, and that system of patrols within each company be at once inaugurated and kept up. These companies are warned to avoid all conflicts of authority or action with the military forces of the Federal Government, and whenever practicable, to act in concert with them. They are also warned to treat them at all times with that respect and courtesy due from one military organization to another and the officers will be held to a strict accountability for any deviation from this order.

By command of
BENJ. G. HUMPHREYS,
Governor and Commander-in-Chief,
State of Mississippi.
JAMES M. KENNARD,
Adjutant General.

PROCLAMATION.

WHEREAS, By recent Legislative enactment, the Executive of this State is authorized to accept the services of, and to commission as many Volunteer Companies as he may deem necessary to keep the peace and preserve order, and for the protection of the lives and property of the citizens; and, whereas, the organization of such companies appears to be imperatively demanded by the present condition of affairs in this State:

Now I, Benj. G. Humphreys, Governor of the State of Mississippi, do earnestly exhort the good people of the several counties in this State to organize themselves into volunteer companies and elect to their command men of known prudence and safety, for the purpose of suppressing crime and preventing lawlessness of any kind and for the better protection of the community at large against all excesses, and for the security of their lives and property. Every company organized under this proclamation shall consist of at least thirty-two privates besides the necessary officers; and shall not exceed one hundred. Within thirty days after the organization of each company, a muster roll of the company and the election proceedings of said companies, certified by a Justice of the Peace, shall be forwarded to the Adjutant General at Jackson, in order that the officers may be commissioned and the organization be duly recorded.

All organizations failing to comply with these requirements, will be considered as not legally organized, and will be disbanded. All companies organized under the proclamation of Provisional Governor Sharkey, which have been reported to this office, will be reorganized, and are properly in commission.

Given under my hand and the great seal of the State of Mississippi, this third day of November, 1865.
BENJ. G. HUMPHREYS,
Governor of Mississippi.
G. A. BROWN,
Secretary of State.

It is said that a prominent Republican of Indianapolis has received information from Washington that Mr. Davis is to be pardoned, if he will leave the country.

Views on Negro Suffrage.

Memphis, Miss., Oct. 8, '65.
My Dear Sir—I was so much impressed with our conversation of last Tuesday, that I returned immediately to my room and wrote down such of the points made as I could remember, and having pondered them all the way home, am to-day, more than ever, convinced that, if corrected by you and returned to me for either public or private use, it will go far to promote a good understanding between you and our leading men.

It will also unite the public mind in favor of your plan, so far at least as you would carry it out without modification.

You are aware that I do not associate much with men in political life, but rather with those who, representing the advanced moral sense of the country, earnestly labor for the good of our people, without hope of, or even desire for office or other immediate reward. The latter class desire earnestly to understand your plans, and, if possible, support your Administration.

I think the publication of your process of reconstruction, with the reasons for your faith in it, will commend itself to their candid judgment, and, as I told you, inspire our whole Northern people with confidence in your Administration.

The report is meagre and unsatisfactory, but I think it conveys, for the most part, the spirit of our conversation. Therefore, although the whole tenor of your words led me to believe it was not intended to be kept private, I have refrained from answering the specific inquiries of anxious friends, whom I met on my way home, lest I might, in some way, leave a wrong impression on their minds.

Truly your friend,
GEORGE L. STEARNS.

To the President of the U. States.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 3—11 1/2 A. M.
I have just returned from an interview with President Johnson, in which he talked for an hour on the process of reconstruction of rebel States. His manner was as cordial, and his conversation as free, as in 1863 when I met him daily in Nashville.

His countenance is healthy, even more so than when I first knew him.

I remarked that the people of the North were anxious that the process of reconstruction should be thorough, and they wished to support him in the arduous work, but their ideas were confused by the conflicting reports constantly circulated, and especially by the present position of the Democratic party. It is industriously circulated in the Democratic clubs that he was going over to them. He laughingly replied, "Major, have you never known a man who for many years had differed from your views because you were in advance of him—claim them as his own when he came up to your stand-point?" I replied, I have, often. He said, so have I, and went on the Democratic party. He said his position was not to be changed, and he was coming to our position I am glad of it. You and I need no preparation for this conversation; we can talk freely on this subject for the thoughts are familiar to us; we can be perfectly frank with each other. He then commenced with saying that the States are in the Union, which is whole and indivisible.

Individuals tried to carry them out, but did not succeed, as a man may try to cut his throat and be prevented by the by-standers; and you cannot say he cut his throat because he tried to do it. Individuals may commit treason and be punished, and a large number of individuals may constitute a rebellion and be punished as traitors. Some States tried to get out of the Union, and we opposed it, honestly, because we believed it to be wrong; and we succeeded in putting down the rebellion. The power of those persons who made the attempt has been crushed, and now we want to reconstruct the State Governments, and have the power to do it. The State institutions are prostrated, laid out on the ground, and they must be taken up and adapted to the progress of events; this cannot be done in a moment. We are making very fast progress, so rapid I sometimes cannot realize it; it appears like a dream.

We must not be in too much of a hurry; it is better to let them reconstruct themselves than to force them to it; for if they go wrong, the power is in our hands we can check them at any stage, to the end, and oblige them to correct their errors; we must be patient with them. I did not expect to keep out all who were excluded from the Amnesty, or even a large number of them but I intended they should see for pardon, and so realize the enormity of the crime they had committed. You could not have broached the subject of equal suffrage, at the North, years ago, and we must remember that the changes at the South have been more rapid, and they have been obliged to accept more upstartish truth than the North has; we must give them time to digest a part, for we cannot expect such large affairs will be comprehended and digested at once. We must give them time to understand their new position.

I have nothing to conceal in these matters and have no doubts or willingness to take indirect courses to obtain what we want. Our Government is a grand and lofty structure in waiting for its foundation. We find it rests on the broad basis of popular rights. The elective franchise is not a natural right, but a political right. I am opposed to giving the States too much power, and also to a great concentration of power in the Central Government. If I interfered with the vote in the rebel States, to disintegrate the negro shall vote, I might do the mischief for my own purpose in Pennsylvania. Our only safety lies in allowing the States to control the right of voting by its own laws, and we have the power to control the right. If they go wrong

If they rebel, we have the army, and we control them by it and if necessary by legislation also. If the General Government controls the right to vote in the States, it may establish such rules as will restrict the vote to a small number of persons, and thus create a central despotism. My position here is different from which it would be if I was in Tennessee.

There I should try to introduce negro suffrage gradually; first those who had served in the army; those who could read and write, and perhaps a proper qualification for others, say \$200 or \$250. It would not do to let the negroes have universal suffrage now; it would breed a war of races.

There was a time in the Southern States when the slaves of large owners looked down upon non-slaveowners because they did not own slaves, the larger the number of slaves their masters owned the prouder they were, and this has produced hostility between the mass of the whites and the negroes. The outrages are mostly from non-slaveholding whites against the negro, and from the negro upon the non-slaveholding whites.

The negro will vote with the last master whom he does not hate, rather than with the non-slaveholding whites whom he does hate. Universal suffrage would create another war, not against us, but a war of races.

Another thing. This Government is the freest and best on earth, and I feel sure is destined to last; but to secure this we must elevate and purify the ballot. I for many years contended at the South that slavery was a political weakness but others said it was political strength; they thought we gained three-fifths representation by it; I contended that we lost two-fifths. If we had no slaves, we should have had twelve representatives more, according to the then ratio of representation. Congress apportions representation by States, not districts, and State apportionments by districts.

Many years ago, I moved in the Legislature that the apportionment of Representatives to Congress in Tennessee, should be by qualified voters. The apportionment is now fixed until 1872; before that time we might change the basis of representation from population to qualified voters, North as well as South, without regard to color, might extend the elective franchise to all who possessed certain mental, moral or other qualifications, as might be determined by an enlightened public judgment.

Government of the State of Mississippi.

B. G. HUMPHREYS, Governor.
C. A. BRUGHIER, Sec'y of State.
THOS. T. SWANN, Auditor.
JOHN H. SCHOLLS, Treasurer.
C. E. HOOKER, Attorney General.

Judges of the High Court of Errors and Appeals.

1st District—H. T. ELIETT.

2d District—A. H. HARRIS.

3d District—W. I. HARRIS.

United States Senators.

W. L. SHARKEY, of Hinds County.

J. L. ALCORN, of Coahoma County.

Representatives in Congress.

1st District—A. E. REYNOLDS, of Tishomingo County.

2d District—R. A. PINSON, of Pontotoc County.

3d District—J. T. HARRISON, of Lowndes County.

4th District—A. M. WEST, of Holmes County.

5th District—E. G. PEYTON, of Copiah County.

Circuit Judges.

1st Dist.—J. M. SHYLLIE, Judge.

J. B. PATTER, District Attorney.

2d Dist.—J. E. MCNAIR, Judge.

J. S. McMillan, District Atty.

3d Dist.—J. S. YERGER, Judge.

F. VALLEY, District Attorney.

4th Dist.—JOHN WATTS, Judge.

A. Y. HARRIS, District Attorney.

5th Dist.—J. P. CAMPBELL, Judge.

S. S. CANNON, District Attorney.

6th Dist.—H. W. POOTE, Judge.

T. H. WOOD, District Attorney.

7th Dist.—JAS. F. TROTTER, Judge.

G. E. HARRIS, District Attorney.

8th Dist.—W. M. HANCOCK, Judge.

C. A. SMITH, District Attorney.

9th Dist.—W. H. KILPATRICK, Judge.

J. A. BAIRD, District Attorney.

10th Dist.—WM. COTHRAN, Judge.

W. A. BARNES, District Atty.

Officers of Lafayette County.

JAMES BROWN, State Senator.

D. ROBERTSON, Representative.

R. W. PHIPPS.

W. E. BUCKNER, Probate Judge.

W. DELAY, Probate Clerk.

W. S. MCKEE, Sheriff.

W. G. VAUGHAN, Circuit Clerk.

JAS. L. KENNEL, Treasurer.

C. W. HARRIS, Assessor.

A. McLEOD, Coroner.

S. T. KING, County Surveyor.

S. F. WOLLEY, Ranger.

Board of Police.

T. L. HARRIS, Dist. No. 1.

A. M. GRAHAM, " 2.

B. C. WEBB, " 3.

F. G. SHIPP, " 4.

S. E. RAGLAND, " 5.